



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PASSENGER MOTOR CARRIER CERTIFICATES OF TRANSPORTATION

I have a van, 1 mini-bus and I want to open a business transporting people to and from various locations in Miami-Dade County. What do I have to do?

In order to use your van to transport people upon the streets and roads of Miami-Dade County for compensation, you must first obtain a Passenger Motor Carrier Certificate of Transportation, issued by the Board of County Commissioners. It is important to understand that you cannot operate until you have approval.

What kind of transportation service can I provide?

Passenger motor carrier service is prearranged transportation where the reservations are made generally 24 hours in advance. Under the Passenger Motor Carrier Code, there are six classes of certificates, which can be applied for. Listed below are the classes of service available and their operating authority:

CONTRACT CARRIER

Any passenger motor carrier who is not a common carrier (any motor carrier who holds his service out to the public) and who repeatedly or continuously transports persons for compensation under a written contract with one or more persons.

CHARTER SERVICE

Transportation of a group of persons pursuant to a common purpose and traveling under a single contract involving the exclusive use of a motor vehicle.

JITNEY

A 15 passenger motor vehicle transporting passengers for compensation on a semi-fixed route between fixed terminals not on a fixed schedule basis.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Transportation of persons in a motor vehicle to a common destination or series of common destinations where the person may be charged as an individual or as part of a group, including but not limited to charter, sightseeing, or subscription service, not between fixed terminals or on a regular route.

Each is different from the other with regards to the operating authority (what you are allowed to do with the certificate). You need to review these definitions and compare them to the type of transportation you wish to provide in your business. In your application, you will need to state which class of transportation service you are applying for.

Are there any requirements pertaining to the size of my van?

Yes. To be eligible for use as a passenger motor carrier vehicle, your van must have a rated seating capacity between 9 and 28 passengers, NOT INCLUDING THE DRIVER. There are a few exceptions:

- a) Vehicles, which are going to be used to provide jitney service, are required to have a maximum seating capacity of 15 passengers;
- b) Vehicles which are going to be used to provide fixed route service can have a seating capacity in excess of 28 passengers;
- c) Vehicles, which have a seating capacity in excess of 28 passengers or are larger than 30 feet in length, are exempt from the provisions of the Passenger Motor Carrier Code unless they are providing jitney or fixed route service.

The service I plan to provide is seasonal. Do I have to operate my service all year or can I stop after the tourist season is over?

Once you have been approved for a certificate of transportation, you will be required to provide transportation service for at least eight (8) months out of the year. If you do not operate for the required time period, the certificate will not be eligible for renewal. In addition, if your vehicle is late for its required inspection, it is considered to be "out of service", and the certificate not being operated. If the vehicle is more than (4) months late for inspection, it will be considered out of service for that period of time and your certificate will not be renewed

What if I have a mini-van, which seats seven (7) passengers, could I use it with this certificate?

No. Passenger Motor Carrier vehicles must seat a minimum of 9 passengers not including the driver.

Can I use this certificate to pick up people in Broward County?

No. The certificate only authorizes you to provide transportation in Miami-Dade County. You would have to contact the Broward County Consumer Affairs Division regarding their regulations and requirements.

I have two vans; do I need two certificates?

No. With one Passenger Motor Carrier Certificate of Transportation, you can place as many vehicles into service as you want, as long as you obtain an operating permit for

each. Each vehicle can only provide the type of transportation service authorized by your certificate. If you had a certificate that allowed you to do CHARTER SERVICE and you wanted to do JITNEY service, you would have to obtain a second certificate to provide the JITNEY service. This may require you to obtain additional vehicles. A vehicle can only be registered to and operate under one certificate. In addition, you must obtain an operating permit for each vehicle prior to providing transportation service.

What are the costs involved in obtaining the certificate?

There is an application fee of \$375.00 for each certificate application submitted. Once the Board approves the application, there is a certificate fee of up to \$500.00. Each vehicle that you place into service under the certificate will have an operating permit. This permit will cost up to \$500.00. It is "up to" because the certificate and operating permit fees are pro-rated based upon the month of approval in relation to the license year. The certificate must be renewed in March of each year. The closer the approval date is to March, the lower the certificate fee. However the certificate and each vehicle will have to be renewed sooner at a cost of \$500.00 for the certificate and each vehicle.

The maximum start-up cost for obtaining a Passenger Motor Carrier Certificate with one (1) vehicle is \$1,375.00: \$375.00 application fee at time of submission; \$500.00 certificate fee upon Board approval; and \$500.00 for the van's operating decal upon final inspection

What do I have to do to obtain one of these certificates?

Complete and submit an application with all of the required attachments. After review for compliance and various notices, it will be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

What information will I be required to provide in the application?

The application asks you to provide general information about the operation of your proposed transportation business and some specific details with regards to the hours of operation, scheduling of transportation, vehicles you will be using and the rates that you will be charging for transportation service.

What else do I have to submit?

In addition to filling out the application, you will be required to provide two credit references, a financial statement, a photograph or colored drawing which shows us what your vehicle(s) will look like, a written outline of a driver training plan for your drivers and information confirming that you can provide the required insurance coverage. Each applicant will also have to undergo a fingerprint background check.

What if I wanted to provide FIXED ROUTE or JITNEY service, would anything else be required?

Yes. A map detailing your proposed route needs to be included with your application. This will be evaluated by the Miami-Dade Transit Agency as part of the overall evaluation of the application.

It is strongly recommended that you meet with the transit planners and allow them to review your proposed route prior to submitting your application. If there is a problem with the route, they will let you know up front and perhaps work with you to make it acceptable. With an application for JITNEY or FIXED ROUTE, if your proposed route does not comply with the Code, conflict/duplicate standards, your application for the certificate will be denied.

Why does all this information have to be provided?

This information is required by the Code and will allow us to completely evaluate your application and determine whether your proposed transportation service will help achieve the intent of the County transportation policies as set forth in the Code.

How long will the approval process take?

The approximate time from the time you apply to the time your application is considered for approval by the Board ranges between five (5) and eight (8) months.

Why so long?

There is a three-step review process for your application. Once it is accepted by this office, a notice of the submission of your application is sent to all of the existing Passenger Motor Carrier certificate holders, all of the municipalities (cities) in Miami-Dade County and interested parties in the ground transportation industry. This notice provides a 20-day protest period for anyone to protest against it.

After the protest period passes and no if challenge has been made to your application, an agenda item will be prepared for submission to the Board of County Commissioners. Please be aware that there is a schedule of available meetings; that there is a required 20 day notice for the public hearing; and that your application will also be reviewed at a Commissioner Sub Committee. This will be a public hearing at which the public can comment. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board will vote to approve the application. You will be notified of the date and time of this meeting.

What happens if a protest is filed?

Should a protest be filed against your application, an independent hearing officer, not associated with transportation, will be appointed to hear the protest. A hearing date is scheduled, all the parties appear and the protest is heard. At the conclusion of the

hearing, the Hearing Officer makes a recommendation to the Director of the Consumer Services Department who makes the final decision to uphold or dismiss the protest. What happens after the Board approves my application?

The Board will conditionally approve your application. PTRD will notify you of the approval and advise you of the conditions or steps which must be followed in order for the certificate to be issued. This will include, among other things, the payment of the certificate fee, submission of a list of the names and Florida driver license numbers of your drivers. Once the fees have been paid and the required information provided, your certificate number will be issued. You then bring your vehicle to our inspection station, obtain your operating decal and you're on your way to your first passenger pick-up once your drivers get their chauffeur registrations.

This information is provided to help you understand what a Passenger Motor Carrier (PMC) certificate is and what you have to do in order to obtain one for yourself. If you have any questions or need further information, please call Mr. Raul A. Gonzalez of the Passenger Transportation Regulatory Division at (305) 375-2470. There is currently a moratorium on the issuance of new Certificates of Transportation.